Poviding protective cover to journalists

2412. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI:
SHRI IQBAL SINGH:
SHRI S. S. AHLUWALIA:

Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that after the Ayodhya incident a demand has been made for the insurance security cover for newsmen and photographers on duty by every publication and setting up of a permanent national fund to render immediate compensation to them;

(b) if so, what is the reaction of Government in this regard;

(c) whether Government propose to bring forward a legislation in this regard; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI P. A. SANGMA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d) The Workmen's Compensation Act, 1923 provides for payment of compensation in the case of injury by accident arising out of and in the course of employment and resulting in disablement/death. The Expert committee for Newspaper employees appointed by the Government had in its report of 15th January, 1919, recommended, *inter-alia*, inclusion of the "newspaper employees on outdoor duties" in schedule II of the W.C. Act 1923 so as to make them eligible for compensation under the Act. The recommendations of the Committee were accepted by the Central Government and in August, 1991 State Governments/Union Territory Administrations were requested to add such employees to the list of hazardous occupations specified in schedule II of the Act, The Employees' State Insurance Scheme which provides for medical care disability benefit, dependent benefits, etc. has also been extended by most State Governments to the newspaper establishments employing 20 or more persons. As such further legislation exclusively for journalists is not considered necessary.

2413. [*Transferred to 18th March*, 1993.]

Child labour in beedi industry

2414. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) wheher Government have made any critical study of the children being bonded into the Beedi industry in the country and the Pvrious problems including health faced by them;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof;

(c) what is the percentage of the total child labour in the country estimated to be in the Beedi industry at the end of 1991 stating their age group;

(d) whether there are any cases where the parents have mortagaged their children to the indusrty to repay the loans taken from contractors in Beedi industry;

(e) if so, what are the details thereof;

(f) whether Government propose to bring a suitable legislation prohibiting the mortagaging of children; and

(g) if so, the steps taken in this direction?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI P. A. SANGMA): (a) to (g) Government had set up a National Com-

mission on Rural Labour to study the probems of rural labour in the country and make recommendations. The Commission had inter-alia made certain observations regarding problem of beedi workers, one of which was the problem of child labour in the beedi industry. Beedi industry is mainly a home-based indusrty where the majority of workers roll beedis in their own houses with the help of material supplied by the employers/contractors. The employment of children below 14 years of age in industrial premises is prohibited under the provisions of Beedi and Cigar Workers (Conditions of Employment) Act, 1966. However, the home-based beedi workers do take the help of their family members including children in rolling beedis. The children of beedi workers are entitled receive medical care from dispensaries/hospitals set up under Beedi Workers' Welfare Fund. No survey/study regarding number of child labour or children being mortgaged or bonded to the beedi industry has been made. In view of this, there is no proposal at present to bring about any legislation in this regard.

Factory causing dust related diseases among workers

2415. DR. BAPU KALDATE:

SHRIMATI KAMLA SINHA:

Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have made any study to identify the factories/units in the country causing dust related diseases among the workers;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof; and

(c) the measures contemplated by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI P. A. SANGMA): (a) to (c) According to information available in this Ministry some studies carried out in the past in some factories/units in which workers were exposed to asbestos silica, cotton, coal and metallic dusts, revealed the following incidence of occupational diseases during the course of studies:

Occupational Diseases	Number of workers Examined	Incidence (%)
Asbestosis	712	7.2
Silicosis	2033	27.6
Byssinosis	1241	8.8
Coal workers Pneumocaniosis	950	18.8
Lead Poisoning (Due to exposure) to fumes and dusts	363	9.8